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Fifteenth Report of the Secretary-General on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone

I. Introduction

1. As Members of the Security Council will recall, in my thirteenth report on the United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone (UNAMSIL) (S/2002/267), I indicated that, should the security situation in Sierra Leone continue to improve after the holding of elections last May, adjustments would need to be made to the current size, composition and deployment of the Mission. Subsequently, on 19 June, I submitted to the Council an interim report (S/2002/679), which provided an assessment of the post-election situation in Sierra Leone. In that report, I also expressed my intention to present to the Council, in September 2002, detailed proposals for the drawdown of the Mission. The present report provides a further assessment of the security situation in Sierra Leone and describes the concept for the adjustment of UNAMSIL.

II. Security situation

2. The security situation in Sierra Leone has remained generally stable. With the exception of raids on border villages by armed elements from Liberia, occasional clashes between youth groups in Kono district and Tongo Fields and the non-indigenous population of these diamond-rich areas, and a crime-driven riot in Freetown on 18 July, no major incidents threatened the country's stability during the reporting period. The presence of UNAMSIL has continued to underpin the stability that has prevailed since the elections of 14 May. In addition, deployments of the Sierra Leone army and police forces to some parts of the country have further reassured the population and added momentum to the gradual return to normality.

3. The qualitative improvement in the overall security situation is manifested in the freedom of movement that is now possible throughout the country, the revival of commercial activity in previously economically dormant areas and the remarkable progress made in resettling displaced populations in all districts except the border areas. Returning refugees are also opting to proceed directly to their areas of origin rather than stay in transit camps.

4. However, while the prevailing calm is encouraging, there remain some serious security challenges that need to be addressed urgently in order to ensure sustained stability in the country. In particular, the 24,000 ex-combatants who are still awaiting reintegration opportunities are becoming increasingly restless and often resort to street protests. Some of them are reportedly being recruited by both the Armed Forces of Liberia (AFL) and the Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD) to fight in Liberia. The confirmation of these reports would be cause for serious concern, as this would pose a threat to Sierra Leone's stability, both in the near future and in the longer term.

5. The large numbers of unemployed youths who are mainly concentrated in urban centres throughout the country present another long-term problem. In this context, the violent incidents that occurred in Freetown on 18 July underscored the volatility of the city. Recently, the Sierra Leone police removed one potential source of insecurity from the capital by evicting some 500 former Civil Defence Forces (CDF) combatants who were occupying a hotel. However, unless economic activity is rapidly revived and employment opportunities are created in the near future, the concentration of unemployed youths and

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frustrated former combatants in the urban areas could become a source of further instability.

6. Despite the Government's ongoing efforts to regulate diamond-mining activities, security remains a concern in the diamond-producing areas of the country. Competition for access to these resources continues to create community tensions. While the arrangements put in place by the Government of Sierra Leone for issuing diamond-mining licences through chiefdom officials are a positive step, they have not yet succeeded in curbing illegal mining. In addition, the local government structures in these areas are yet to be fully installed, and the police personnel and resources are sparsely deployed. Thuggish youth groups are attempting to fill the vacuum created by the absence of firm Government control. These groups have been particularly assertive in Kono district and Tongo Fields, where, as mentioned above, they have attempted to expel residents who originally came from other districts.

7. The challenges faced by the Government in the efforts to consolidate its authority in the provinces go beyond the diamond areas. Although Government officials have been deployed to the districts and most paramount chiefs have returned to their areas, the district administrations still lack adequate capacity to deliver basic services to the population. Furthermore, the effectiveness of the administration of law and order in the districts continues to be hampered by logistical challenges, as well as by the inadequate strength of the police force and the limited coverage of the judicial and penal systems. This is a very serious gap, considering that the primary objective of the deployment of UNAMSIL throughout the country was to facilitate the restoration of State authority.

8. A major objective of the disarmament process in Sierra Leone was to dismantle the military apparatus of CDF and the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) and encourage the latter to transform itself into a political party that would pursue its interests through a democratic political process. By all assessments, the military structures of RUF inside Sierra Leone have crumbled after disarmament, and the movement has formally transformed itself into the Revolutionary United Front Party (RUFP). However, the prospects of keeping the recently formed RUFP in the mainstream of the democratic process are now uncertain. There are indications of disarray within the party, and its influence has continued to decline following its poor performance in the elections of 14 May. Citing financial difficulties, the party has closed some of its main offices in the districts, and its Secretary-General, who was also its candidate in the presidential elections, resigned from the party on 13 August. The implications of these developments for the country's stability remain unclear, and UNAMSIL is closely monitoring them. The current RUFP leaders, however, have said that they take these developments as a challenge to reorganize and ensure their party's survival. UNAMSIL also continues to monitor CDF, whose local command structures have remained intact in some areas where, in the absence of the police force, they have continued to usurp the enforcement of law and order.

9. In addition to the challenges described above, it is also important to note that sustained stability in Sierra Leone will depend on the Government's capacity to effectively assume responsibility for the country's security after the departure of UNAMSIL. Despite significant improvements in the operational capabilities of the Sierra Leone army and police, these security forces still face serious shortcomings and do not yet have the capacity to sustain a stable security environment on their own.

10. My interim report to the Council (S/2002/679) stressed that the conflict in Liberia constituted the most serious threat to the stability that now prevails in Sierra Leone. Regrettably, that situation has not changed. Despite reinforced Sierra Leone army deployments in the border areas, armed elements from Liberia continue to raid border hamlets for food and to abduct villagers. In addition, when under pressure from the opposing side, AFL and LURD forces in Liberia have tended to retreat to the border areas of Sierra Leone and Guinea. Dozens of AFL soldiers and, lately, LURD elements have deserted their units and handed themselves over to Sierra Leonean authorities. The Government of Sierra Leone has decided to construct a special camp for these deserters.

11. There are also persistent reports that former RUF field commander Sam Bockarie and his followers are still active in some of Liberia's security structures. However, there has so far been no evidence of links between them and the leaders of RUFP in Sierra Leone. The presence in Liberia of Bockarie and his followers, and of recently recruited ex-RUF and ex-CDF combatants, could pose the risk of a vicious cycle of violence, not only in Sierra Leone, but also in the wider Mano River Union subregion.

III. Benchmarks

12. Notwithstanding the continuing challenges described above, the successful completion of the disarmament process last January and the stability prevailing since the May presidential and parliamentary elections have created new circumstances that now make it possible to consider adjustments to the size and composition of UNAMSIL. However, in order to ensure that the process of downsizing the Mission does not jeopardize the progress achieved so far in stabilizing Sierra Leone, steps must be taken to minimize the remaining threats, and support for the consolidation of peace in the country should be maintained, as called for by the Security Council in its resolution 1400 (2002) of 28 March 2002. The task of downsizing the Mission, while at the same time consolidating the peace and addressing the remaining security challenges, will be a delicate one requiring careful assessment and balancing. To this end, specific benchmarks that should guide the envisaged drawdown of UNAMSIL have been identified.

13. The paramount concern in implementing the adjustments to the Mission will be to avoid creating a security vacuum in the country. Consequently, progress in building up the capacity of the Sierra Leone police and army will constitute the key security benchmark that should determine the pace of the drawdown process. The other benchmarks will consist of priority tasks aimed at minimizing the security challenges described earlier, and include completing the reintegration of former combatants, consolidating State authority throughout the country and restoring effective Government control over diamond mining. It may be recalled that these priorities, in fact, constitute a key part of the issues identified in the Lomé and Abuja Agreements as crucial for the success of the Sierra Leone peace process. It is therefore imperative that they be accomplished before UNAMSIL's departure from Sierra Leone. Progress towards the resolution of the conflict in Liberia must also be an important benchmark, as it will inevitably affect how UNAMSIL adapts to the prevailing security conditions on the ground. These benchmarks are explained in detail in paragraphs 14 to 25 below.

A. Building the capacity of the army and police

14. The International Military Advisory and Training Team, which is led by the United Kingdom, has achieved remarkable progress in restructuring, training and equipping the Sierra Leone army. Nevertheless, the shortcomings described in my interim report have persisted. Issues of particular concern are the makeshift nature of the army's accommodation facilities in its areas of deployment and the rudimentary state of its permanent garrison locations. Efforts to address these shortcomings, as well as the army's equipment shortfalls, will need to be accelerated in order to ensure the sustainability of its deployments as UNAMSIL draws down.

15. The Sierra Leone police force has also recovered significantly over the past two years, primarily due to its new leadership, the refresher courses provided by United Nations civilian police and the Commonwealth team, and the equipment it has received from the United Kingdom and the United Nations Development Programme. UNAMSIL has also provided the necessary logistical assistance during the deployment of the police force to the 17 police districts, and resources from the United Nations Trust Fund for Sierra Leone have been used to construct some new police stations. However, the police force still lacks sufficient training facilities, transport, communications equipment and police stations, and is understaffed.

16. The Government of Sierra Leone has decided to bring the strength of the national police force to its pre-war level of 9,500 personnel. In order to achieve this goal, the police force needs to recruit 3,000 new cadets. Finding qualified candidates will be a major challenge, given the disruption of the school system during the war. The police training centres at Hastings and in the provinces will also need to be refurbished in order to meet the training needs of the national police force. Currently, the only functioning training centre at Hastings has the capacity to train only 200 cadets per intake. This has to be expanded to 250 per intake if the Government's target of recruiting and training 1,000 cadets per annum is to be met. The police force also needs to be adequately equipped, and more police stations should be built across the country.

17. These tasks, which are crucial for the accomplishment of the critical security benchmark for the drawdown of UNAMSIL, will require a central role

and enhanced engagement on the part of donor countries. It should also be noted that the police force can function effectively only if the complementary sectors of the State, in particular the judiciary and the penal systems, are rehabilitated and adequate staff recruited and deployed. A comprehensive assessment of the needs in all these areas will have to be conducted urgently by the Government of Sierra Leone.

18. The Government of Sierra Leone also has to play its part in addressing the challenges facing the national police force. Recently, the Government adopted a strategic plan for the development of the police force. The plan identified key objectives: recruiting new cadets; providing training for new recruits and for trainers, as well as further training for serving personnel; and providing the necessary equipment and infrastructure for the police. The Government has also indicated its intention to increase the budget for the police so as to facilitate the recruitment of the additional personnel required. This is a commendable step. However, more needs to be done to ensure that the police are adequately remunerated, in order both to enhance morale and discipline and to attract quality personnel. Sustaining the deployments and operations of the police force will also be a major challenge for the Government.

B. Reintegration of ex-combatants

19. The disarmament and demobilization process cannot be considered a success unless the reintegration process — a key component of the programme, designed to give former combatants an alternative way of life — is completed. To date, of the more than 55,000 former combatants who registered for reintegration (including those disarmed prior to the May 2000 crisis), some 31,000 have been absorbed in reintegration projects, while the other 24,000 are still awaiting reintegration opportunities. Progress in absorbing them in the reintegration programme has been hampered primarily by financial constraints. The effect of these constraints in delaying the reintegration process has been particularly remarkable in the Kono and Kailahun districts, the two most serious flashpoints in the country. In Kailahun, which borders Liberia, there is a troubling concentration of ex-combatants, making them easy prey to be lured to fight in Liberia. Aware of the danger posed by the situation, the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration plans to place about 7,000 ex-combatants in the reintegration programme every six months, so that all the remaining ex-combatants would be absorbed by mid-2004. There are also plans to devise special programmes for former senior commanders and leaders of RUF and CDF, because they may not fit into the regular reintegration programmes. However, the National Committee has informed UNAMSIL that there is a shortfall of $13.5 million in funding for reintegration, and that the funds currently available from the World Bank's Multi-Donor Trust Fund for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in Sierra Leone will be depleted by September.

20. The goal set by the National Committee for Disarmament, Demobilization and Reintegration to place every registered ex-combatant in a reintegration project by mid-2004 can be achieved only if the funding needed for reintegration is made available by the donor community. This goal, which is a benchmark in itself, would greatly contribute to the consolidation of stability and facilitate the successful downsizing of UNAMSIL. Drawing down in areas where there are still large numbers of idle ex-combatants would be accompanied by risks of renewed instability.

C. Restoration of Government control over diamond mining

21. The illicit mining and international trading of diamonds played a major role in fuelling the war in Sierra Leone, and remain a potential source of instability. Considerable progress has been made in increasing official exports of diamonds under the Certificate of Origin regime established by the Government of Sierra Leone pursuant to Security Council resolution 1306 (2000). However, the infrastructure in the diamond-rich areas is severely damaged, and, as indicated above, there is considerable tension between the indigenous people of the diamond-mining areas and other groups. The current system of allocating licences may need to be reviewed so as to ensure that concessions are awarded in a transparent manner that brings clear benefits to local people and the national economy. In addition, the Government needs to consolidate its authority in the volatile diamond-mining areas.

D. Consolidation of State authority

22. As UNAMSIL draws down, it is important to ensure that effective civil authority is restored throughout the country, in order to facilitate the maintenance of law and order and establish structures that can deliver basic services to the people. To this end, bilateral and multilateral assistance is needed for rehabilitating administrative facilities, refurbishing district courts and prison facilities, training magistrates and providing local administrations with a minimum of equipment.

23. UNAMSIL intends to provide limited assistance for the process of filling 60 vacant paramount chiefdoms. The process is scheduled to take place from September to December 2002. Of more significance are the local government elections that will be held for the first time in more than 25 years. That process should further deepen the democratic process in Sierra Leone through decentralization, and thus lead to greater transparency in governance. The local government elections are being planned for April 2003, and the Chairman of the National Electoral Commission has already forewarned my Special Representative to expect a request for UNAMSIL assistance. It will be recalled that the Mission's assistance was crucial to the successful holding of the May 2002 general elections. It will therefore be advisable to envisage assistance for the local government elections in the areas of security and logistics, and this is being taken into account in UNAMSIL's drawdown planning.

E. The conflict in Liberia

24. As indicated earlier, the interaction of developments in Liberia and Sierra Leone will inevitably affect the adjustments to be made to UNAMSIL. Measures need to be taken to ensure that the Sierra Leone army has the means and capability to deter border incursions by armed Liberian elements. The Government should also urgently investigate and take measures to halt any recruitment of ex-combatants by AFL and LURD that may be taking place. In addition, the Government needs assistance to construct internment camps to enable it to control the deserting AFL and LURD elements who have entered Sierra Leone.

25. Increased efforts on the part of the international community are also needed to find a durable solution to the conflict in Liberia. A cessation of hostilities in that country would facilitate an early and orderly drawdown of UNAMSIL. In this regard, the ongoing initiatives of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the efforts to improve relations among the three Mano River Union countries, under the auspices of King Mohammed VI of Morocco, are commendable. However, it is imperative that the wider international community, in particular the Security Council, urgently engage Liberia in a substantive, long-term manner, with a view to safeguarding the progress made in Sierra Leone and achieving regional stability. In the meantime, the border areas of Sierra Leone will continue to be considered key terrain, requiring UNAMSIL troops to maintain the necessary capability to backstop the Sierra Leone army. UNAMSIL troops should be expected to continue dominating such terrain until steps are taken to find a lasting solution to the Liberian conflict.

IV. Adjustments to and drawdown of UNAMSIL

26. The proposals presented in this section cover the adjustments that would be made to the size and composition of the military component, civilian police and other civilian components of UNAMSIL. The adjustment and drawdown concept takes into account the benchmarks described above and is designed to adapt UNAMSIL to the current circumstances, while ensuring that it will continue to be able to support the efforts of the Government of Sierra Leone to consolidate peace. The drawdown of the Mission would be executed in a measured, phased and deliberate manner intended to enable it to maintain, at every stage, an appropriate level of military capability and mobility, until it can gradually hand over responsibilities to a sufficiently effective Sierra Leone army and police. The concept also recognizes the need to guard against the risk of the drawdown process itself precipitating renewed instability.

27. In devising the plan, a mechanism was established for consultation and coordination with the Government of Sierra Leone, including the police and the army. My Special Representative has kept President Kabbah updated on the planning process. On 8 August, I received a letter from the President in which he provided important ideas on benchmarks to be taken into account in downsizing UNAMSIL. That letter has

been circulated as a document of the Security Council (S/2002/975). In addition, UNAMSIL extensively consulted other partners on the ground, including ECOWAS, donors and the diplomatic community in Freetown.

A. Military component

28. The proposed plan for downsizing the military component of the Mission is based on an evaluation of a series of possible security scenarios. The worst-case scenario, which could emerge in the event that there is no satisfactory progress in building up the capacity of the army and police, and if the threat from Liberia becomes more critical, envisages a drawdown process extending for a considerable period of time. The scenario considered the most likely assumes effective and timely international investment in a capable Sierra Leone police force and army, which is faced with only minor domestic and external challenges. In this scenario, the military component could realistically be expected to draw down over a period of approximately two years, with withdrawal largely completed by December 2004, provided that sufficient investment is made in developing the Sierra Leone police and army capabilities.

29. The broad drawdown concept being proposed remains valid for all the scenarios that have been considered. The concept envisages an initial phase during which adjustments would be made to the force through the "pruning" of troops that are no longer operationally essential while still maintaining a presence throughout the country. These adjustments, which could begin as soon as the Security Council approves the proposals, are expected to result in a reduction in the strength of the peacekeeping force by some 600 troops by the end of 2002.

30. Subsequently, the peacekeeping force would draw down in a series of phases and vacate areas of the country that are identified through benchmarks as being ready for handover to Sierra Leone's security forces with minimum risk. These phases would be interspersed with a period of stabilization and assessment at the end of each significant force withdrawal, in order to monitor local, national and subregional reaction before the next step of the drawdown begins.

31. Specifically, in the second phase, UNAMSIL troops would concentrate in the central part of the country, around key provincial towns, the main lines of communication, the principal diamond fields and the areas bordering Liberia. During this phase, which could begin as early as January 2003 and could be completed by August 2003, UNAMSIL's five sectors would be reduced to three, and four major units (4,000 troops) would be withdrawn. The remaining 13,000 troops would dominate key terrain and threat areas. A robust monitoring capability would be maintained in the vacated areas, using United Nations military observers and the civilian component of UNAMSIL. The Sierra Leone police and army, with enhanced capacity, would take over the areas vacated by UNAMSIL troops in order not to create a security vacuum. UNAMSIL troops would still maintain sufficient mobility and military capacity to reach the vacated areas in a timely manner, should the need to deter or counter any resurgence in violence arise.

32. As soon as conditions allowed, the third phase would follow, with significant further troop reductions, from 13,000 down to about 5,000 by late 2004, although this is predicated entirely on the Sierra Leone police being able to assume their responsibilities in the areas to be vacated by UNAMSIL. In this phase, the peacekeeping force would pull back to the Freetown and Lungi peninsulas and hand over responsibility for security in the hinterland to the Government of Sierra Leone. Tentatively, in the final phase a presence of some 2,000 military personnel is envisaged, the precise form of which would be dependent on the nature of the security situation at that time, as well as on the assessment of progress made in attaining the benchmarks. In this regard, the Security Council may wish, before the commencement of the third phase, to once again take comprehensive stock of the drawdown process, the benchmarks attained and the prevailing security situation, with a view to deciding on the final exit of UNAMSIL and successor arrangements.

B. United Nations civilian police

33. As requested by members of the Security Council, UNAMSIL, the Secretariat and the Government of Sierra Leone have discussed a range of ideas that would enable the civilian police component of UNAMSIL, in partnership with the Commonwealth team, to contribute proactively to strengthening the

capacity of the Sierra Leone police. These consultations suggest that, given the role it has played so far in advising and training the Sierra Leone police, as well as in providing support for its deployment, and considering the available logistical capacity of UNAMSIL, the civilian police component of the Mission, together with the Commonwealth team, could play an enhanced role in assisting in the recruitment of new Sierra Leone police cadets; devising and delivering a basic and field training programme for the new recruits; providing additional training to serving personnel; training Sierra Leonean trainers; providing advice on strategic and operational planning; and devising and supporting a deployment plan aimed at enhancing security in the areas to be vacated by UNAMSIL troops.

34. Such an enhanced role for the civilian police component of UNAMSIL would require its strength to be increased to 185 personnel, from its currently authorized strength of 60. The enlarged United Nations civilian police component would consist of 57 trainers assigned to the police training facilities at Hastings and in the provinces to provide basic training for new recruits, as well as refresher courses for serving personnel and training for Sierra Leonean trainers; 85 trainers assigned to the 17 police divisions across the country to provide on-the-job tutoring and mentoring; 15 trainers assigned to the Sierra Leone police at the headquarters level, as well as at regional and divisional levels, to provide management training; 16 senior-level mentors assigned to the Sierra Leone police headquarters to provide advice on operational and strategic planning; and 10 officers, as well as a commissioner and a deputy commissioner, assigned to UNAMSIL headquarters to provide guidance and support to the above-mentioned teams. UNAMSIL and the Secretariat are developing a concept of operations for such an enhanced role for United Nations civilian police.

35. Coordination between the Sierra Leone police, United Nations civilian police and the Commonwealth team would be ensured through a steering committee, to be chaired by the Inspector General of the Sierra Leone police. It is envisaged that the Commonwealth team would continue to provide logistical assistance, as well as specialized training, particularly to the Operations Support Division and other specialized branches of the police force.

C. Other civilian components

36. As the drawdown of the military component began, appropriate adjustments would also be made to the other civilian components of the Mission — the political, human rights, policy planning, civil affairs, public information, disarmament, demobilization and reintegration coordination, and administrative sections. These adjustments would take into account the new tasks that may be entrusted to the Mission. At the same time, as the activities of the Special Court and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission begin, there may be need for an increase in some components of UNAMSIL so that the Mission can provide adequate support to these important institutions. It is therefore envisaged that my Special Representative would keep under constant review the tasks of the substantive components and recommend the necessary adjustments.

V. Transition to peace-building and national recovery

National recovery efforts

37. Sierra Leone is today one of the poorest countries in the world. A decade of conflict has left its legacy not only in loss of life, widespread poverty and destroyed infrastructure, but also in the severe depletion of national capacity. President Kabbah addressed a number of the issues his Government intends to tackle in his inaugural speech on 12 July. The gradual and phased drawdown of UNAMSIL would provide the Government of Sierra Leone breathing space to build up its capacity and mobilize the resources needed to address not only the consequences of the war, but also its root causes, in particular misgovernance, corruption and the erosion of fundamental human rights. While pursuing the programme of political reform and capacity-building, the Government will at the same time face the challenge of addressing the remaining emergency relief needs and rebuilding the economy. The transition to peace-building and national recovery will therefore inevitably be dominated by an array of competing security, economic and social demands that call for careful, integrated planning.

38. The Government has established a National Recovery Committee, chaired by the Vice-President, which is responsible for developing and coordinating national recovery efforts. The Committee brings

together Government representatives and all relevant international partners present in the country. Under the Committee's auspices, a national recovery strategy has been developed, which identifies the recovery needs of each district. These include the resettlement of displaced populations, the special needs of women and children victims of the war, the restoration of critical social services and community reconciliation.

39. The United Nations country team in Sierra Leone, working together with UNAMSIL, has developed a plan for supporting the national recovery strategy. The plan focuses on coordination for recovery, facilitating the reintegration of returning populations, encouraging community reconciliation and promoting the protection of human rights. The funding needs for the national recovery strategy will be presented at a donors' meeting planned for November 2002. For this purpose, the Government, the United Nations country team and non-governmental organizations are preparing, in coordination, both the relief and recovery funding needs for the year ahead. One of the major challenges the Government will face is that of regulating diamond-mining activity, which has the potential to generate the much-needed revenue for national recovery.

40. The humanitarian situation of internally displaced persons and refugees will remain a major challenge in the peace-building process. All efforts must be directed towards creating the right conditions for sustainable return and resettlement. The Government and humanitarian agencies expect to complete the resettlement of the remaining 11,000 internally displaced persons by October 2002, at which point all camps of internally displaced persons would be officially closed.

41. On the other hand, the influx of Liberian refugees into Sierra Leone, whose infrastructure is already under strain from its own returnees, remains a source of concern. The United Nations country team has developed a contingency plan that makes provision for 125,000 refugees crossing into Sierra Leone by the end of 2002. As of 31 August, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees had registered 56,000 Liberian refugees in Sierra Leone, of whom 35,000 are living in poor conditions in camps. Such is the problem being posed, in terms of both internal security and the strain on resources, that the Government of Sierra Leone has recently written to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Ruud Lubbers, expressing its utmost concern over the situation and seeking his support in the development and implementation of appropriate strategies to address the issues at hand. Urgent funding is required to ensure proper care and durable solutions. In addition, the Government would need to take more concrete action in screening the camps for ex-combatants. So far, only slow progress has been made in the establishment of separate internment camps.

VI. Special Court

42. The Special Court for Sierra Leone began its operations in Sierra Leone with the arrival in early July of the Registrar, the Prosecutor and their advance teams. On 25 July 2002, the appointment of eight judges to serve in the Trial Chamber and the Appeals Chamber were announced. Alternate judges for the two Chambers have also been identified, in case the Special Court decides to make such appointments. According to the statute of the Special Court, judges of the Trial Chamber will take office shortly before the investigation process has been completed, and judges of the Appeals Chamber will take permanent office when the first trial process has been completed.

43. In laying the administrative and financial bases for the existence and operation of the Special Court, a process of recruiting both international and local staff has begun, and a loan agreement for the release of a number of United Nations staff has been concluded. The Registrar of the Court recently submitted to the Department of Peacekeeping Operations a comprehensive list of areas in which the Court needs support from UNAMSIL. UNAMSIL has received a similar request for logistical support from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. Discussions between the Special Court and the Mission on support for the Special Court (on a fee-for-service basis) in the areas of procurement, security and logistics have been initiated. Pending the completion of the permanent building for the Special Court, the advance teams of both the Registrar and the Prosecutor have been operating from the Bank of Sierra Leone complex.

VII. Human rights, national reconciliation and justice

44. The promotion of human rights, national reconciliation and justice constitutes an integral part of the transitional process aimed at building durable peace. In this regard, the support of UNAMSIL for the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, within available resources and in cooperation with the United Nations Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, will continue to be important. By supporting an operational, effective and fully funded Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the international community and UNAMSIL could squarely address one of the potential destabilizing factors that could undermine the consolidation of peace, namely, the perceived lack of support provided to victims of the conflict in contrast with the assistance provided to ex-combatants. I therefore once again strongly encourage the international community to respond urgently and generously to the recent appeal by the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights for contributions to ensure the continued operation of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. It should be recalled that, of the budget of almost $7 million for the operation of the Commission, revised from the earlier figure of about $10 million, only about $1.1 million has been pledged.

45. The consolidation of peace and of the rule of law will require the creation of sustainable local capacity to promote and protect human rights. This should include the establishment and strengthening of relevant democratic institutions and the implementation of legislation, legal remedies and protection mechanisms. The priority in the current period should be to support the creation of a competent, independent and impartial judiciary capable of addressing issues such as access to justice, prolonged pre-trial detention, juvenile offenders and crime, in tandem with the efforts to strengthen the police force. National judicial structures, as well as all other areas of the administration of justice, also need to be made responsive to gender and child-protection concerns.

46. It is imperative to identify viable actors within the Government and civil society to progressively take the lead in the promotion and protection of human rights. In this regard, national institutions, the Ombudsman's office and human rights non-governmental organizations need to be strengthened during the transition to peace-building, through training and capacity-building, in order to ensure their sustainability.

Protection of children

47. Children under the age of 18 make up approximately 50 per cent of the population of Sierra Leone and were particularly affected by and targeted during the conflict. Addressing the special needs of war-affected children will therefore continue to be a priority throughout the transition process. The successful reintegration of former child combatants and other children separated from their families requires a long-term approach and commitment. Particular attention will be given to children who were bypassed by the formal disarmament process. Community-based reintegration programmes are being developed to provide former child combatants, girl mothers and street children with access to education, skills training or apprenticeships, and to fully integrate them into communities. Special care will be needed for sexually abused girls.

48. Continued United Nations support will be critical for the strengthening of child protection structures in Sierra Leone, in particular child protection committees and child welfare committees at the district and chiefdom levels. UNAMSIL and the United Nations Children's Fund are supporting the newly established National Commission for War-Affected Children, which will play a critical role as a national advocate to raise child-protection concerns. Appropriate measures will have to be undertaken to ensure that the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, which is to give special attention to the experiences of children during conflict, and the Special Court for Sierra Leone, whose jurisdiction includes specific crimes against children, develop and implement child-sensitive procedures for involving children in their work.

49. Within UNAMSIL, several steps have been taken in order to prevent and address cases of sexual abuse and exploitation, an issue highlighted in Security Council resolution 1400 (2002). These include, in particular, the establishment of child-protection committees within battalion and company units, the setting up of a personnel conduct committee, improved systems of monitoring and reporting and a training-of-trainers programme in child protection at the level of warrant officers and sergeants. Similarly, the United

Nations country team and the humanitarian community have strengthened preventive measures, such as the issuance of standards of accountability for humanitarian and development workers and the establishment of mechanisms for community monitoring and reporting.

VIII. Financial aspects

50. The General Assembly, by its resolution 56/251 B of 27 June 2002 appropriated the amount of $699.8 million gross for the maintenance of UNAMSIL for the period from 1 July 2002 to 30 June 2003. Should the Security Council approve my recommendations, set out in paragraph 58 below, concerning the extension of the mandate of UNAMSIL, the cost of the operation and maintenance of the Mission during the extension period will be limited to resources approved by the General Assembly.

51. As at 31 July 2002, unpaid assessed contributions to the special account for UNAMSIL amounted to $231.8 million. The total outstanding assessed contributions for all peacekeeping operations at that date amounted to $1,863.4 million. Contributions to the Trust Fund to support United Nations peacekeeping-related efforts in Sierra Leone amounted to $2.5 million, with expenditure authorized in the amount of $2.4 million.

IX. Observations

52. Since the completion of the disarmament process last January, Sierra Leone has witnessed steady and remarkable progress in a number of important areas, which has opened up expanded peace-building and recovery opportunities. In the security sector, the initial deployments of the Sierra Leone army and police have prepared the ground for developing their capacity to take over security responsibilities from UNAMSIL. On the political front, the successful May presidential and parliamentary elections have laid a solid foundation for the Government to consolidate its authority throughout the country, restore its control over natural resources and foster good governance. With the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Special Court established, it is now possible to move the process of national reconciliation forward and address the human rights abuses of the past.

53. The initial steps taken by the Government of Sierra Leone to utilize these opportunities are commendable. In particular, I welcome the recent approval of a strategic development plan for the Sierra Leone police and the budgetary allocations for the recruitment of additional police cadets. Furthermore, the ongoing deployment of Government officials in the districts, as well as the planned filling of vacant paramount chiefdoms and the holding of local government elections, should contribute further to the consolidation of the Government's authority throughout the country. The development of a national recovery strategy that provides a framework for reviving economic activity, rehabilitating the infrastructure, restoring public services, resettling returning populations and meeting the needs of women and children victims of the conflict is also a very welcome step. In the meantime, the establishment of the National Recovery Committee has resulted in an integrated approach to planning for the transition to peace-building, which is bringing together the relevant Government departments, United Nations development agencies, UNAMSIL and donors.

54. These encouraging developments, along with the steady improvement in the security situation in Sierra Leone, have created new circumstances in the country that make it possible to consider beginning the drawdown of UNAMSIL. The ultimate objective of the drawdown process is to conduct a gradual, phased and deliberate transfer of responsibility for the security of Sierra Leone from UNAMSIL to the Government of Sierra Leone, in a manner that gives the Government the opportunity to build its capacity and enables it to sustain the prevailing stable conditions. The drawdown proposals presented in the present report emerged from a very careful analysis of the existing security situation, as well as a thorough threat assessment. They are also a product of close consultations with the Government of Sierra Leone. In addition, the views of members of the Security Council and countries contributing troops to UNAMSIL were sought and taken into account in finalizing the proposals.

55. I believe that, in the present circumstances, these proposals constitute the most realistic strategy for adjusting the Mission without putting at risk the progress achieved so far. In the light of the views expressed by members of the Security Council and troop contributors during recent consultations, it is important to stress that the pace of the drawdown

process will have to be governed by progress in achieving the specific benchmarks identified in this report. The Government of Sierra Leone and the international community are therefore strongly encouraged to make a timely and effective investment for the accomplishment of these benchmarks. This would make it possible to accelerate the pace of the drawdown process.

56. The beginning of the drawdown of UNAMSIL will take the Mission into the final phase of the United Nations peacekeeping operation in Sierra Leone, which is recognizably one of the most difficult aspects of such operations. Its outcome will be critical in determining whether the efforts of the international community in the country over the past few years can be considered a durable success. The considerable political, human and financial resources invested in Sierra Leone so far have brought us to the verge of success. However, if not adequately addressed, the challenges remaining in the country could easily undermine this progress. In order to safeguard its large investment in Sierra Leone, the international community must stay the course, provide the resources needed to complete the reintegration of ex-combatants, enhance the capacity of the Sierra Leone police, ensure the effective functioning of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and support the transition to peace-building, and thereby grasp the success that is within reach. The Government of Sierra Leone, too, must do its part by redoubling its efforts to consolidate its authority throughout the country and restore control over the natural resources, which should generate the revenue needed to lay the foundations of sustainable recovery.

57. In the meantime, I remain deeply concerned about the conflict in Liberia. Unless the international community engages constructively in Liberia with a view to bringing that conflict to an early end, it could escalate further, jeopardizing the progress achieved in Sierra Leone and destabilizing the wider Mano River subregion. A possible prolonged stalemate in the conflict would have equally tragic consequences for the people of Liberia. I therefore exhort the international community to address urgently the Liberia issue and take the necessary action, in consultation with ECOWAS, which is already engaged in commendable efforts to find a resolution to the conflict.

58. In view of the considerations explained in the present report, I recommend that the Security Council approve the proposals set out in paragraphs 26 to 36 above for the adjustment and drawdown of UNAMSIL and that it extend the mandate of the Mission for a further period of six months, in order to facilitate the commencement of this crucial process. Should the Council approve these proposals, it is expected that implementation of the first phase of the drawdown plan could begin without delay. Following completion of the first phase, I would submit a report providing an assessment of its implementation and making further recommendations concerning the commencement of the second phase. This would provide UNAMSIL, the Government of Sierra Leone and the Security Council the opportunity to take stock of the security situation, in particular the potential threats to stability identified in the present report, and to evaluate progress made in accomplishing the benchmarks.

59. In conclusion, I wish to express my appreciation to the Security Council and troop-contributing countries, as well as to ECOWAS and donor countries, for their continued support for UNAMSIL. I particularly commend the UNAMSIL military contingents, which have continued to make available their own resources to improve the lot of the people of Sierra Leone through community projects, the provision of medical facilities and support for other humanitarian activities. I also wish to pay tribute to my Special Representative, Oluyemi Adeniji, and all UNAMSIL military and civilian personnel, as well as the Government of Sierra Leone and the donor community, for their tireless efforts to bring lasting peace to the country.

Annex

United Nations Mission in Sierra Leone: contributions as at 27 August 2002

Authorized military strength: 17,500 (up to 260 military observers)

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Sector headquarters staff*	*Total*
Bangladesh	12	18	4 183	65	4 278
Bolivia	6				6
Canada	5				5
China	6				6
Croatia	10				10
Czech Republic	5				5
Denmark	2				2
Egypt	10				10
France	1				1
Gambia	24				24
Germany			12		12
Ghana	6	11	851	59	927
Guinea	12	5	775		792
Indonesia	10				10
Jordan	10	2	120		132
Kenya	11	14	995	65	1 085
Kyrgyzstan	2				2
Malaysia	10				10
Mali	8				8
Nepal	10	5	800		815
New Zealand	2				2
Nigeria	10	16	3 222	62	3 310
Pakistan	10	18	4 201	50	4 279
Russian Federation	15	4	106		125
Slovakia	2				2
Sweden	3				3
Thailand	5				5
Ukraine	5	5	637		647
United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	15	7			22
United Republic of Tanzania	12				12

	Military observers	*Staff officers*	*Troops*	*Sector headquarters staff*	*Total*
Uruguay	11				11
Zambia	10	6	819	5	840
Total	**260**	**111**	**16 721**	**306**	**17 398**

Force Commander: Kenya; Deputy Force Commander: Nigeria; Chief Military Observer: Pakistan.

Civilian police: Bangladesh: 6; Canada: 2; Cameroon: 1; Gambia: 4; Ghana, 9; India: 2; Jordan: 5; Kenya: 5; Malaysia: 4; Nepal: 8; Niger: 2; Nigeria: 3; Norway: 5; Senegal: 4; Sri Lanka: 4; Tanzania: 2; Zambia: 8; Zimbabwe: 10; total: 80.

UNAMSIL
Deployment as of
September 2002
National capital
Provincial capital
Town, village
International boundary
Provincial boundary
The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.
GUINEA
SIERRA LEONE
LIBERIA
ATLANTIC OCEAN
NORTHERN
SOUTHERN
EASTERN
WESTERN AREA
Mamou
Faranah
Médina Dula
Falaba
Bafodia
Kabala
Konta
Kamakwie
Kamalu
Fadugu
Koinadugu
Banian
Bambaya
Yombiro
Bendou Bodou
Forécariah
Fandie
Freetown
Goderich
Wellington
Hastings
Waterloo
York
Magburaka
Bumbuna
Bendugu
Alikalia
Kayima
Tefeya
Yomadu
Masingbi
Yengema
Koidu-Sefadu
Njaiama Sewafe
Njaiama
Tungie
Yele
Mongeri
Boajibu
Panguma
Tongo
Lago
Bendu
Manowa
Pendembu
Buedu
Kailahun
Mile 91
Rokel Bridge
Pepel
Lunsar
Port Loko
Rokupr
Mape
Lungi
Masiaka
Magbuntoso
Rotifunk
Moyamba
Taiama
Njala
Dambara
Mano
Bo
Sembehun
Shenge
Sierromco
Mokanje
Bumpe
Tikonko
Gbangbatok
Nitti
Kpetewoma
Koribundu
Sumbuya
Matru
Bonthe
Pujehun
Zimmi
Kenema
Mano Jct
Segbwema
Daru
Tokpombu
Joru
Potoru
Gorahun
Kongo
Bendaja
Sulima
Bomi Hills
Bong
Kle
Robertsport
Bopolu
Gbinti
Matebor
Batkanu
Mamuka
Ribia
Pendembu
Binkolo
Makeni
Baibunda
Matotok
Lunsar
Port Loko
Rokel Bridge
Pepel
Masiaka
Magbuntoso
Waterloo
Rotifunk
Moyamba
Taiama
Njala
Bo
Kenema
Daru
Segbwema
Kailahun
Manowa
Pendembu
Buedu
Bendu
Lago
Panguma
Tongo
Boajibu
Mongeri
Yele
Tungie
Njaiama Sewafe
Njaiama
Koidu-Sefadu
Yengema
Masingbi
Yomadu
Tefeya
Kayima
Alikalia
Bendugu
Bumbuna
Magburaka
Makeni
Binkolo